

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/987,356

Examiner

Jonathan G. Sterrett

Applicant(s)

HACK ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 9-13-06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 71-77.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date 20061114.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 20061114.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


TARIQ R. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Examiner's Amendment

1. An examiner's amendment to the record is attached to the Office Action. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Milan Kapadia, Reg. 55,982 on 14 November 2006. See attached interview summary.

2. The claims below are the pending claims in the application.

1-57. (Withdrawn)

58-65. (Cancelled)

66-70. (Withdrawn)

71. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying a business supply-chain collaboration between supply-chain participants, wherein the supply-chain participants are members of a business community and the supply-chain participants interact according to a predefined consecutive order, the method comprising:

receiving data that identifies the supply-chain participants and interactions between the supply-chain participants;

receiving data that identifies the consecutive order of the interactions;

processing the data received to displaying, in a first view, at least two columns representing business activities of the supply-chain participants, wherein each column represents at least one of the supply-chain participants in the interactions, order of the columns from left to right represents a flow of goods, and the business activities are represented by individual polygons within the at least two columns;

processing the data received to displaying, in the first view, the business activities in individual polygons, wherein the polygons are positioned adjacent to each other and to represent the interactions between the supply-chain participants in the business supply-chain collaboration;

processing the data received to displaying, in a second view, the at least two columns in the same order as the first view, wherein the polygons are not touching adjacent and are connected by lines, and the interactions between the supply-chain participants are represented by the lines connecting the polygons;

processing the data received to displaying, in a third view, the at least two columns, wherein the at least two columns include at least one additional column, each of the at least one additional columns representing specific computer components used to implement the interactions between the supply-chain participants and utilization of the computer components by the supply-chain participants.

72. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 71 further comprising, displaying on the left of the at least two columns in the first view, an additional two columns, one of

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the additional two columns listing qualitative business benefits provided by the ~~business~~ supply-chain collaboration of the supply-chain participants, and the second of the additional two columns representing quantitative business benefit information, wherein the qualitative and quantitative business benefit information represents upstream benefits from the ~~business~~ supply-chain collaboration between the supply-chain participants.

73. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 71 further comprising, displaying on the right of the at least two columns in the first view, an additional two columns, one of the two additional columns listing qualitative business benefits provided by the ~~business~~ supply-chain collaboration of the supply-chain participants, and the second of the two additional columns representing quantitative business benefit information, wherein the qualitative and quantitative business benefit information represents downstream benefits from the ~~business~~ supply-chain collaboration between the supply-chain participants.

74. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 71, further comprising generating the second view upon receiving a request from a user to alter the first view.

75. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 71, wherein the polygons in the first view are hexagons.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 71, wherein displaying, in the third view, comprises displaying availability of the components.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 71, further comprising:
detecting that a user shifts at least one of the polygons from a first area to a second area;
updating a variable that is related to the at least one of the polygons and that depends on which area the at least one of the polygons covers; and
updating and displaying a second variable that is a function of the first variable.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. **Claims 71-77** are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

4. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

None of the prior art of record, taken individually or in any combination, teach, inter alia, displaying a supply chain collaboration represented by at least two columns in a first displayed view, where the columns represent participants in a supply chain collaboration, and where polygons are positioned adjacent within the columns to

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represent business activities of the participants; and where a second view includes the columns where the polygons representing activities are not adjacent but rather connected by lines, where this connection represents their interaction; and where a third view is displayed that includes the same two columns and at least a third column, where this third column represents specific computer components used to implement the interactions between the participants and the utilization of these components by the participants;

as recited in independent **Claim 71**.

The novelty of the invention is in the combination of the limitations cited in independent **Claim 71** and not in any specific individual claim limitation.

The prior art reference most closely resembling the applicants claimed invention is **Stephens**.

While **Stephens** discloses using the SCOR (Supply Chain Operations Reference) model to visually represent a supply chain, including illustrating interactions including material and information flow between supply chain participants, it lacks utilizing columns to represent business entities, where within the columns business interactions are represented by adjacent polygons, and utilizing a second and a third view, where the second view shows interacting entities that are no longer adjacent but rather connected by lines, and where the third view includes at least one additional

column that represents computer components used by the participants to implement the interactions, and where the at least one additional column represents computer components utilized by the participants , as recited in **Claim 71**.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Drawings

5. The drawings filed on 11-14-2001 are acceptable subject to correction of the informalities indicated below. In order to avoid abandonment of this application, correction is required in reply to the Office action. The correction will not be held in abeyance.

Figure 8 contains a number of typographical errors that appear to be a space inadvertently inserted in various words.

#810 includes the word "**and**" spelled "**a nd**".

#820 includes the word "**Order**" spelled "**Orde r**".

#830 includes the word "**For**" spelled "**Fo r**".

#840 includes the word "**to**" spelled "**t o**".

#860 includes the word "**Depictions**" spelled "**De pictions**".

#870 includes the words "**Between**" spelled "**Be tween**" and "**Consecutive**" spelled "**Consec utive**".

#880 includes the word "**Third**" spelled "**Thi rd**".

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

JP11316780A by Cho discloses a workflow system having hierarchical business process definition.

US 5953707 by Huang discloses the management of an agile supply chain.

US 6233493 by Cherneff discloses a computer implemented product development planning method.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jonathan G. Sterrett whose telephone number is 571-272-6881. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-6.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR.

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Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JGS



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